

**Nebraska Information Technology Commission
Community Technology Fund 2001**

McCool Junction Community Technology Connection Application

Section I: General Information (Required)

A. Project Title: McCool Junction Community Technology Connection

Name of Submitting Entity: McCool Junction Public School in
cooperation with the Village of McCool Junction

Project Contact Information: McCool Junction Public School

Name: Mr. Jeffery Walburn / Mrs. Carolyn Newton

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B. Certification for Request

I certify that to the best of my knowledge the information in this
application is correct and that the application has been authorized by
this entity to meet the obligations set forth in this application.

Authorized Signature: _____

Typed Name: _____ Mr. Jeffery Walburn _____

Title: _____ Superintendent _____

Name of Entity: _____ McCool Junction Public School / Village of McCool Jct. _____

_____ Date: _____ February 15, 2001 _____

_____ Total State Funds Requested: _____ \$28,800.00 _____

Section II: Executive Summary (Required)

_____ McCool Junction Public School and the Village of McCool Junction are governed by progressive persons who are interested in keeping pace with the world in the fast moving technical revolution. Our school has done a great job in providing our students with the basics in computers and multimedia. Selected high school students have been trained as tech assistants to assist the elementary students and teachers with computer technology. This spring these students will be offering training sessions to the community. Many persons in our community are now catching the fever from the students and are interested in learning more about computers and extending their knowledge in higher education fields. Our school and village would like to assist these people by providing a Long Distance Learning Station at the high school technology site. Members of the community would be able to monitor seminars and take higher education classes from this site as well as having access to computers. The students of McCool Junction Public School would be provided with the opportunity to take classes that are not offered at our physical site and they would also be able to take college classes while still attending our high school. The school would be willing to arrange after school hours to help benefit the community and students. The Long Distance Learning Station would benefit village employees, volunteer firefighters, first responders, community members, students and teachers at McCool Junction Public School. Quoting David Thornburg, FETC Conference, March 99, *This is the first time in history that the student, teacher, and content do not have to be in the same place at the same time.*

The village office of McCool Junction does not have internet capabilities in their office location. The school is willing to provide a room with an internet connection, maintenance of equipment as well as technical support for the Learning Station. School personnel are willing to arrange tech time for village personnel, McCool Junction industrial personnel and patrons of McCool Junction to help promote higher education.

To achieve our goal the Village of McCool Junction and the McCool Junction Public School will need to establish a fiber optic line to the school (Dark Fiber Solutions Engineering and Design - Galaxy Cable), purchase a Cisco 2610 router, Cisco Layer 3 Switch and Power Play Distance Learning Classroom Equipment. Given the financial restraints that the \$1.00 mill levy will place upon our school system, obtaining this necessary equipment may not be feasible. Grant funding is imperative for our village and school system to advance forward on this beneficial community project.

Section III: Goals and Objectives (Required)

The main goal of the proposed Learning Station project is to provide access to lifelong educational and training opportunities for the citizens of McCool Junction. (NI TI -1) The Learning Station would also encourage collaboration between our community and other communities to help stimulate growth and economic development in the future and to create a support network for smaller rural communities. (NI TI -2) and (CC-4) With the addition of the proposed Learning Station our First Responders and Rural Firefighters would be encouraged to benefit from training classes and lectures in their field without having to travel long distances or give up daytime work. (NI TI -3) Cooperation between the Village of McCool Junction and the McCool Junction Public School to coordinate the use of the Otech roomO would ensure access to information technology for all persons in our community regardless of social and economical status which, in turn, encourages the development of a workforce knowledgeable in information technology. (CC-1) and (CC-3) By coordinating our efforts with Educational Service Unit #6 our proposed Learning Station equipment and training would be compatible with other like institutions in the State of Nebraska. (CC-2)

The citizens of McCool Junction are very community minded and want to provide the best available opportunities for our patrons and their children. In the early days the OJunctionO was added to McCool because of all the trains that ran through the community. Now that highway #81 has bypassed our town and the trains and their tracks have been removed from our village we want to help our village survive in a new way. We would like to bring that same OhubO of activity to McCool Junction through the Ovirtual hubO of technology and a long distance learning station. This addition would allow community members to continue to live and work in their small, close-knit community by providing education through their community learning station.

Section IV: Scope and Objectives:

The addition of a Long Distance Learning Station to the community of McCool Junction will benefit many persons in our community of 374 people as well as the persons living in the surrounding farming area. The 149 students of McCool Junction Public School will have the opportunity to take higher level classes that are not presently offered in our curriculum. They will also be able to monitor different programs of interest and take college classes before graduation. This will help our students make clear, informed decisions in important career choices. The patrons of the community would also benefit from the Learning Station addition. They would be able to take higher level classes, take training classes and monitor lectures of interest without traveling long distances and giving up as much time with their families. This aspect would encourage patrons to continue their education, and in turn, they would become more progressive in planning the future of our community. Our patrons would also be able to coordinate efforts with other small rural communities to make sound decisions that would affect their future.

Our goal would be monitored by log sheets stating which persons are using the equipment and what classes they are interested in. We would also use this information to encourage other persons with like interests to join in on the learning experience. Class offerings would be posted in the village news letter along with sign up information which will be coordinated through the village office and the school. Patrons and students would be encouraged to use the school facilities to benefit their learning experiences. Technology instructors would be available to assist students and patrons with class and equipment questions.

Section VI: Implementation

Implementation of our project would begin when notification of the grant acceptance is received. The school will order all necessary equipment from suppliers and will coordinate the ordering through Educational Service Unit #5 (in Beatrice) and Educational Service Unit #6 (in Milford). Our efforts would be concentrated on creating a Distance Learning Station that would be compatible with others in Nebraska. This summer village supervisor Jim Green and school

maintenance personnel will work with Galaxy Cable to bring the fiber optic line into the school building and install all necessary hook ups for the Distance Learning Equipment. When the equipment arrives we would enlist the services of ESU personnel to ensure correct set up and installation. Training on the use of the equipment would be given to school instructors by ESU personnel after installation is complete.

Village clerk Vanee Holtmeier and school personnel will coordinate efforts to post class offerings in the local village news letter and the school news letter. They will also coordinate scheduling time for all interested patrons. High Ability Learners that are identified in our school system and other interested students will be given the opportunity to take higher level classes and will be coordinated through the school guidance counselor. All persons and classes that are taken will be logged in and scheduled. Copies of this log will be available as evidence of appropriate use of equipment.

With the combined efforts of the ESU, village personnel, school personnel and Galaxy Cable we would be ready to offer services by the fall of 2001.

Section VII: Technical Impact

Hardware for the Long Distance Learning Station will include: Power Play Distance Learning Classroom Equipment, Cisco Layer 3 Switch and Cisco 2610 Router. Software and design will come from Dark Fiber Solutions engineering and design. Hardware and installation of fiber optic cable will be contracted from Galaxy Cable. The McCool Junction Public School and the Village of McCool Junction personnel will coordinate all purchases and installation of equipment with the assistance of ESU personnel. ESU #5 personnel has determined that the requested equipment will meet the needs of our village and school and is compatible with existing equipment used in other Nebraska entities.

At the present time the school does not have the equipment to offer Distance Learning to it's students and the patrons of the village. Given the financial restraints that the \$1.00 mill levy will place upon our school system, obtaining this necessary equipment will not be feasible with grant funding.

Section VIII: Risk Assessment

Risks involved in implementing the Long Distance Learning Station project in McCool Junction are minimal. With the combined efforts of the village and school personnel continued support for the project is guaranteed. Maintenance and up-grades on equipment will become the responsibility of the McCool Junction Public School and will be evaluated by the Educational Service Unit. Proposed equipment and installation services are coordinated to meet the standards of other public entities and will support the long distance learning infrastructure of Nebraska.

Section IX: Financial Analysis and Budget (Required)

Power Play Distance Learning Classroom Equipment	\$18,360.00
Cisco Layer 3 Switch	\$3,500.00
Cisco 2610 Router	\$3,500.00
Dark Fiber Solutions engineering and design (Galaxy Cable)	<u>\$15,000.00</u>
Total Cost of Project	\$40,360.00

The McCool Junction Public School and Village of McCool Junction are requesting \$28,8000.00 in grant funds to be combined with the McCool Junction Public School district pledge of \$11,560.00 to complete this beneficial community project. The school and Educational Service Unit #6 will supervise the ordering and installation of all distance learning equipment required. Village Superintendent Jim Green and school personnel will coordinate the installation of the fiber optic cable from Galaxy Cable. School and village personnel will coordinate scheduling the use of the ÓtechÓ room and equipment. The McCool Junction Public School and Educational Service Unit #6 personnel will assume all maintenance and upgrade on equipment and provide technical training for individuals using the equipment. The McCool Junction Public School will assume monthly billing charges for services.